

# Nancy Johnson



Fifth District, Connecticut

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## Johnson's Farmington River Bill to Become Law

### *River Group Expresses "Deep Gratitude" for Congresswoman's Leadership*

WASHINGTON, DC – The U.S. House today gave final approval to Congresswoman Nancy Johnson's bill to study new environmental protections for the Farmington River. The measure will now be sent to the President for his signature.

The bill authorizes a study of the lower Farmington River and Salmon Brook to determine its eligibility for federal protection and designation under the Wild and Scenic Rivers Program. The bill passed the House by voice vote today. The Senate passed its version last year.

"The Farmington River and Salmon Brook are environmental, cultural and recreational treasures for our state, and it is important to preserve them for future generations," said Johnson, who secured federal protections for the 14-mile western branch of the river in 1994. "By commissioning a feasibility study, this bill officially sets in motion the process of securing Wild and Scenic environmental protections for the river and the region."

Eric Hammerling, Executive Director of the Farmington River Watershed Association, said, "We are thrilled that Congresswoman Johnson sponsored and passed the 'Lower Farmington River Wild and Scenic Feasibility Study Act.'"

"Congresswoman Johnson has been a terrific advocate for rivers in the 5th District. We owe her deep gratitude for her keen understanding that healthy rivers support healthy communities, and this is a strong legacy she will leave to the Farmington Valley," Hammerling said.

Johnson's bill is the necessary first step toward achieving the Wild and Scenic designation. The measure commissions a National Parks Service study of Salmon Brook and the Farmington River between the end of the west branch in Canton and the Rainbow Dam in Windsor. The legislation builds on the designation of the west branch of the Farmington River as a Wild and Scenic Partnership River, which Johnson secured in 1994.

Congress created the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System in 1968 to preserve the character of scenic, recreational, or historic rivers and the communities along them, as well as to ensure development preserves the free-flowing condition of these rivers. More information on the program can be obtained on the web at <http://www.nps.gov/rivers>.